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UNCLAS STATE 249039

ALL POSTS FOR PAO, USSOCOM FOR POLAD

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: OPRC, KPAO

SUBJECT: WHA GUIDANCE, NOVEMBER 19-22, 2004

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## Summary of Contents:

1. WHA Press Guidance, Nov 19 (Cuba, Haiti, Venezuela)
  2. WHA Press Guidance, Nov 22 (Venezuela)
- End Summary.

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1. WHA PRESS GUIDANCE, NOVEMBER 19, 2004:  
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-- DEFECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE PERFORMANCE GROUP "HAVANA NIGHT"  
IN LAS VEGAS --

QUESTION: WHY DID THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT GIVE VISAS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE PERFORMING GROUP "HAVANA NIGHT" WHEN IT HAS DENIED VISAS TO SO MANY OTHER CUBAN ARTISTS?

A: THE DEPARTMENT'S VISA RECORDS AND DELIBERATIONS ARE CONFIDENTIAL PURSUANT TO SECTION 222(F) OF THE IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT.

HOWEVER, WE CAN TELL YOU THAT THE U.S. INTERESTS SECTION IN HAVANA ISSUED VISAS TO MEMBERS OF "HAVANA NIGHT" IN JULY 2004.

IN THE PAST WE HAVE DENIED VISAS TO CUBAN PERFORMING ARTISTS UNDER SECTION 212(F) OF THE INA, PURSUANT TO PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION 5377 OF OCTOBER 4, 1985, WHICH SUSPENDS ENTRY INTO THE UNITED STATES OF OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNIST PARTY, WITH VERY LIMITED EXCEPTIONS.

THE MAJORITY OF CUBAN ARTISTS RECEIVE COMPENSATION FROM AND ARE THUS EMPLOYEES OF THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT, AND THE PROCEEDS FROM THE SALE OF MATERIAL ASSOCIATED WITH THEIR PERFORMANCES IN THE UNITED STATES ACCRUE NOT TO THE ARTISTS THEMSELVES, BUT DIRECTLY TO THE CASTRO REGIME.

AFTER A CASE-BY-CASE REVIEW OF THE APPLICATIONS OF MEMBERS OF "HAVANA NIGHT", 46 WERE FOUND ELIGIBLE FOR A VISA.

QUESTION: DOESN'T YOUR CUBA POLICY APPEAR INCONSISTENT, WHEN CUBANS WHO RECEIVE TEMPORARY VISITOR VISAS CAN USE THEM TO DEFECT AT THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY?

A: WE ISSUED VISAS TO THESE INDIVIDUALS IN ORDER THAT THEY COULD PERFORM IN THE UNITED STATES.

ANY ALIEN IN THE UNITED STATES CAN APPLY FOR ASYLUM. I REFER YOU TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.

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QUESTION: HOW MANY "HAVANA NIGHTS" PERFORMERS DEFECTED?

A: WE HAVE SEEN REPORTS THAT 43 OF THE 46 PERFORMERS APPLIED FOR ASYLUM. I REFER YOU TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.

-- ALLEGED PAYOFFS FROM A U.S. COMPANY TO  
JEAN-BERTRAND ARISTIDE --

QUESTION: COMMENT ON ALLEGED PAYOFFS MADE BY THE NEWARK, NEW JERSEY-BASED COMPANY IDT CORPORATION TO FORMER HAITIAN PRESIDENT JEAN-BERTRAND ARISTIDE

A: THE TREASURY AND JUSTICE DEPARTMENTS ARE INVESTIGATING A NUMBER OF ALLEGATIONS AGAINST FORMER PRESIDENT ARISTIDE. WE REFER YOU TO THOSE AGENCIES FOR COMMENT.

-- VENEZUELA: ASSASSINATION OF PROSECUTOR --

Q: ANY REACTION TO APPARENT CAR-BOMB ASSASSINATION OF PROSECUTOR DANILO ANDERSON?

A. THE UNITED STATES STRONGLY CONDEMNS THIS ACT OF TERRORISM DIRECTED AGAINST PROSECUTOR DANILO ANDERSON.

WE OFFER OUR CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILY OF THE VICTIM OF THIS HORRIFIC CRIME AND CALL FOR A FULL INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION OF THE PERPETRATORS.

THE UNITED STATES UNEQUIVOCALLY DEPLORES THE USE OF TERROR AND VIOLENCE. WE URGE ALL VENEZUELAN TO REJECT EFFORTS TO RESOLVE POLITICAL DIFFERENCES OR ACHIEVE POLITICAL OBJECTIVES THROUGH VIOLENT MEANS.

IF ASKED:

Q: WAS ANDERSON INVOLVED IN THE CASE AGAINST THE NGO SIMATE AND OTHER CASES INVOLVING THE PROSECUTION OF NGO'S RECEIVING U.S. FUNDING?

A: WE REFER YOU TO THE GOVERNMENT OF VENEZUELA ON THIS QUESTION.

Q: WILL THE U.S. ASSIST IN THE INVESTIGATION OF THIS CRIME?

A: THE UNITED STATES HAS NOT RECEIVED A REQUEST FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF VENEZUELA TO ASSIST IN THE INVESTIGATION AT THIS TIME.

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THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT ACCUSES THE UNITED STATES OF  
HARBORING TERRORISTS

QUESTION: COMMENT ON REPORTS THAT THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT  
IS ACCUSING THE UNITED STATES OF HARBORING TERRORISTS WHO MAY  
BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE RECENT ASSASSINATION OF VENEZUELAN  
PROSECUTOR DANILO ANDERSON.

A: THESE ALLEGATIONS ARE FALSE AND BASELESS. IF THE  
VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT HAS EVIDENCE THAT THE KILLERS OF DANILO  
ANDERSON ARE PRESENT IN THE UNITED STATES, IT SHOULD SHARE  
THAT INFORMATION WITH US IMMEDIATELY. TO DATE, THE VENEZUELAN  
GOVERNMENT HAS NOT DONE SO.

AS WE SAID EARLIER, WE OFFER OUR CONDOLENCES TO HIS FAMILY OF  
MR. ANDERSON AND CALL FOR A FULL INVESTIGATION AND  
PROSECUTION OF THE PERPETRATORS. WE CONTINUE TO URGE ALL  
VENEZUELAN TO REJECT EFFORTS TO RESOLVE POLITICAL  
DIFFERENCES OR ACHIEVE POLITICAL OBJECTIVES THROUGH VIOLENT  
MEANS.

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2. WHA PRESS GUIDANCE, NOVEMBER 22, 2004:  
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-- VENEZUELA'S GOVERNMENT ALLEGES THAT THE UNITED STATES IS  
SUPPORTING ANTI-CHAVEZ OPPOSITION GROUPS IN FLORIDA --

QUESTION: WHAT IS U.S. RESPONSE TO VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT  
ALLEGATIONS THAT YOU ARE SUPPORTING ANTI-CHAVEZ OPPOSITION  
GROUPS IN FLORIDA?

A: THESE CHARGES ARE UNFOUNDED AND OUTRAGEOUS. IF THE  
VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT HAS ANY EVIDENCE, THEY SHOULD SHARE IT  
WITH US THROUGH DIPLOMATIC AND LAW ENFORCEMENT CHANNELS.  
OTHERWISE THEY SHOULD CEASE THESE CLAIMS AND FOCUS THEIR  
ATTENTION ON A PROFESSIONAL INVESTIGATION OF THIS MURDER.

-- VENEZUELA: PRESIDENT OF THE STATE OIL COMPANY  
ALI RODRIGUEZ APPOINTED FOREIGN MINISTER --

QUESTION: ANY COMMENT ON THE APPOINTMENT OF ALI RODRIGUEZ,  
THE HEAD OF THE STATE OIL-COMPANY PETROLEOS DE VENEZUELA, TO  
BE VENEZUELA'S FOREIGN MINISTER?

A: WE LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER  
RODRIGUEZ IN HIS NEW CAPACITY.

WE HAVE HAD A GOOD WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH MR. RODRIGUEZ AS  
HEAD OF THE STATE-OWNED OIL COMPANY, PETROLEOS DE VENEZUELA.

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WE WANT TO WORK JOINTLY ON A RANGE OF BILATERAL ISSUES.

IF ASKED:

Q: DO YOU EXPECT THE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP TO IMPROVE? DOES THIS SIGNAL A CHANGE IN VENEZUELA'S FOREIGN POLICY?

A: AS TO WHETHER THIS SIGNIFIES A CHANGE IN POLICY, I REFER YOU TO THE GOVERNMENT OF VENEZUELA.  
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